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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

548

DS/R file

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: May 14, 1953

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: Guillermo Putzeys (leader of the anti-Communist Comité Civico Nacion in Guatemala)
Carlos Padilla, Jr. (U.S. Citizen Resident of Washington, son of Dr. Carlos Padilla now in Guatemala)
MID - Mr. Fisher

COPIES TO: American Embassy, Guatemala (Informally)
ARA
DRA
ARA Board

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A Colonel Scobey, military editor of the Kiplinger Letter called to ask if I would receive the above named individuals right away, which I agreed to do.

Mr. Putzeys said he had left Guatemala with his wife on March 17, but that since the Guatemalan Government had used the Salamá uprising on March 29 as a pretext to jail or force into exile practically all the leaders of the anti-Communist movement, he was afraid to return home at the present time. He said the Salamá incident was an isolated and ill-advised affair. He said he planned to go to San Salvador.

Mr. Putzeys said his movement had 300,000 members, but that with the leadership uprooted by the Government on the pretext of complicity in the Salamá affair, he feared the rank-and-file would lose courage and give up the struggle. He said they needed help of some kind, but when I said that the United States' strict policy of non-intervention in internal affairs continued unchanged, he readily agreed that the U.S. should not involve itself in Guatemalan political affairs. He said he fully approved of our attitude in that respect.

Mr. Putzeys seemed to have no definite purpose in visiting me, but finally suggested that it would be a good idea for the Department to send someone

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someone to Guatemala to see for himself how bad conditions are. I said the Department was very well informed, and was aware of the danger of the Communist influence evident in the country.

Mr. Padilla said he felt reassured in learning that the Department of State was not ignoring events in Guatemala and was cognizant of the Communist danger.

ARA:RMR:JMFisher:mem